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New Horizons 2006 – Honduras

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Photo by Staff Sgt. Beth Orlen

Airman 1st Class Evan Bingman, 11th Civil Engineer Squadron, and Isidro Domingues, Honduran Army civil engineer, work together to complete a wall at the maternity clinic construction site in Jutiapa, Honduras.

Hondurans, U.S. servicemembers learn to communicate to get job done

By Staff Sgt. Beth Orlen
*New Horizons 2006 –
Honduras*

It's taken learning new languages and ways of doing things, as well as a little sign language, but the members of New Horizons 2006 – Honduras are working together seam-

lessly to provide security to the team, build a maternity clinic and four schools, and give free medical care to local communities.

The humanitarian exercise team consists of members from the U.S. Air Force, Army, Marines and Navy, and the Hon-

duran army and air force which proved to be a bit of a challenge, according to New Horizons officials.

"The way they (the Americans) do things is a little different," said Jesus Bejarano, a Honduran army 1st Engineering Battalion

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Work

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civil engineer, "but it's good to learn to do work a little different."

Air Force Tech. Sgt. Glenn Ellingson, a 940th Air Refueling Wing safety and continuity NCO, agrees.

"If they have a better way of doing things, then we do it that way," he said.

It is this open communication that has made the New Horizons projects and the American-Honduran team come together as one unit.

"They are completely satisfied with having us here," said

Cpl. Oswaldo Lopez, a Honduran Army welder. "I don't feel alienated, and I feel like I'm a part of the team."

Part of the team is exactly how Tech. Sgt. Eric Townsend, a 908th Security Forces Squadron member from Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., treats his Honduran counterparts.

"I believe that (they) are no different than us," he said. "I joke with them just like I joke with my fellow U.S. security forces members."

"We work hand in hand with them," said Corporal Lopez. "If we dig, they dig."

But getting around

the language barrier has also been a learning experience.

The U.S. service-members began communicating by simple hand signals, and then progressed to learning a few Spanish words and teaching a few English words, said Sergeant Ellingson.

Once the two came to understand each other, the job became a learning experience and a sense of pride amongst the team.

"This has been a great experience," said Corporal Lopez. "I'm proud to be part of (New Horizons) and the fact that I've helped the local community."

Briefs

Chapel services set

The base chapel has scheduled a Good Friday service at 7 p.m. Transportation is available for the 3:30 p.m. Catholic service.

In addition, a sunrise service is set for 5:30 a.m. April 16 to celebrate Easter. A second Easter service is 8 a.m. at the base chapel.

Correction

One of the winners of last week's "Where's Ducky?" contest was identified incorrectly. Senior Airman Melissa Roberts was one of the winners.

Where's Ducky?

Congratulations to the winners in last week's scavenger hunt for Ducky, the unofficial New Horizons 2006 - Honduras mascot. Tech. Sgt. Eric Townsend and Lance Cpl. Mark Holt correctly guessed Ducky was on a rusted headlight socket on one of the old Toyota Jeeps by the tent city parking lot entrance. Stop by the Morale, Welfare and Recreation office for your prize.

The rules are simple: The first three people to correctly guess where Ducky is will receive a prize. All guesses must be personally brought to the public affairs office or the MWR office before Thursday.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Beth Orlen

Stack'em high

Logistics entry point of New Horizons supplies

Story by Pfc. Ryan A. Cleary
*196th Mobile Public Affairs
Detachment*

On the far reaches of base April 4, Airmen from the 178th Fighter Wing of Springfield, Ohio, prepared the marshalling yard for their latest shipment.

Meals Ready to Eat, Unit Ground Rations, bottled water and cement blocks for local construction sites are shipped to the marshalling yard for inventory, stocking and distribution.

"Anything that's shipped, comes through us," said Senior Airman Sena Johnson with the 178th FW.

The yard is a flat, concrete slab located about three-quarters of a mile from tent city. The yard is constantly changing in size and layout because the shipments have to have room to arrive within a wide time period.

"The 178th in collaboration with the 179th from Mansfield, Ohio, the 180th from Toledo, Ohio, and 269th also from Springfield are all logistics readiness squadrons that handle everything that is consumable and used for building," said Tech. Sgt. Todd Marshall with the 178th FW.

"It's sporadic – some things coming in every week, other things taking months. The MREs, UGRs, water and blocks are the regular," said Master Sgt. Time Dedy, a 178th FW member.

The unit has downtime, but New Horizons 2006 – Honduras gets shipments all the time around



Photo by PFC. Ryan A. Cleary

Senior Airman Sena Johnson and Tech. Sgt. Todd Marshall of the 178th Readiness Logistics Squadron provide cover for bags of cement used at the construction sites of Operation New Horizons April 4.

here, so they're always on the ready," said Marshall.

"In the beginning, almost every shipment was block," said Johnson. The blocks come in pallets of 550 units and are used to build four schools and one clinic for local Hondurans in the vicinity of La Ceiba.

"Our main mission is making sure the right stuff goes to the right people," said Dedy. "We keep the counts and inventory so we know how much is in there. That allows us to gauge how much is needed for the next order. Our biggest function is making sure everyone has what they need."

"Anytime, day or night, they'd be more than willing to support us," said Tech. Sgt. Timothy Benning, member of the 940th Air Refueling Wing, and Superintendent

of Services on base.

The largest problem that the 178th has been faced with so far though is not the shipments or the orders, but the scorpions residing in the cement block-piles stacked in the yard.

Almost every time a block is moved, some sort of insect or creature is present making the job a little more difficult.

Not all is bad for the 178th though, this is the first time for many of their members working in a joint task environment containing Soldiers, Marines, Sailors and Airmen.

"It's great to work with all the branches. This is my first deployment, and I've met a lot of cool people, and made many good friends while being down here," said Johnson.



U.S. service members save Filipino girl

ZAMBOANGA CITY, MINDANAO, Republic of the Philippines – A Marine corporal was among the four U.S. service members who donated their blood March 28 to save the life of a 3-year-old Filipino girl being treated for typhoid fever and anemia at the Zamboanga City Medical Center.

The girl was in dire need of type A-negative blood, said Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Frank W. Thompson.

“In the Filipino community, that means almost certain death,” he said. “Only Caucasians (normally) carry the A-negative blood type.”

Dr. Ben Caranay of the Zamboanga City Medical Center knew the only hope he had was to go to the Americans with Joint Special Operations Task Force – Philippines. The JSOTF-P’s medical team scanned their personnel databases and found possible donors.

Cpl. David Bombard, Petty Officer Jeffrey Simpson, Army Sgt.

Maj. Robert Saiz, Army Sgt. Michael K. Light volunteered to give blood.

They arrived to find 12 Filipino hospital staff members waiting earnestly just for them.

Before drawing blood, they met the girl they were there to help. She was confined to a hospital bed, attached to an IV, going through one of the weekly, intense fevers from the typhoid fever. She was unable to comprehend what was occurring.

Bombard of the JSOTF-P Marine Security Element has donated blood five times before, but this time it was different.

“It meant more. You knew who the blood was going to,” said the 21-year-old from Hesperia, Calif.

Each of the service members donated 450 cubic centimeters of blood.

“The hospital staff did a wonderful job at making sure the donors were as comfortable as possible,” said Thompson.



Courtesy photo

Marine Cpl. David Bombard, Army Sgt. Maj. Robert Saiz, Army Sgt. Michael Light and Petty Officer 1st Class Jeffrey Simpson of the Joint Special Operations Task Force – Philippines visited the bedside of three-year-old Frail Silo at the Zamboanga City Medical Center on the Southern Island of Mindanao.

The donation brought new hope to the girl’s family, said Thompson.

“They were going to take the girl back home the next day to let her die at home because they weren’t able to find a compatible donor,” he said.

Now, she will hopefully be going home healthy in a few days.

“I have a 2-month-old son at home,” said Simpson. “I just thought about (the girl) while donating, and if the situation was reversed, I would want someone to do the same thing for

(my son),” said the 28-year-old Bards, Ky., native.

To Bombard, his donation was the very least he could do.

“I just donated the blood. It was the Philippine doctors who actually saved her life.”

Each of the blood donors said that if given the opportunity again to help others in need they would whole-heartedly donate.

“When you go to the Pediatrics Ward and see the children in need, you’re moved to do good things for them,” said Thompson.

Navy rating mergers open new doors

A Sailor asked me a question during a recent All Hands Call in La Maddalena, Italy, concerning the reasons behind rating mergers and the potential impact these mergers will have on promotion opportunities.

As our Navy seeks to leverage complex technology to meet the changing requirements of its mission, the expectation of the jobs skills of every Sailor are changing.

We need Sailors who are ready, willing and able to adapt to changing mission requirements by developing broader knowledge and understanding of related ratings to accomplish the job.

Because the Navy is moving toward optimal manning of our ships, like the new LCS platform, the Navy needs Sailors who can handle many different jobs, and Sailors with diversified abilities who are up to the challenge.

As the Navy combines common job characteristics and skills, we eliminate much of the duplication in training and work we do, which helps improve our effectiveness as a force.

While there are important advantages to the Navy, merging ratings has a significant impact on the Sailors affected and

their careers. Because such moves often have a dramatic effect, each change requires a detailed analysis to evaluate the impact a rating merger will have.

Recently, about 13,000 Sailors in a wide range of jobs in the Navy have been part of a rating merger, or soon will have their rating merged with another.

On the plus side, rating mergers can provide a real career boost by increasing the opportunity for advancement, especially in ratings where, historically, it's been hard to move up.

Because the push toward merging ratings is focused on meeting the constantly changing joint missions of the Navy, advancement exams are moving away from those centered on administrative data toward the specific tasks and level of knowledge to perform the job of the next pay grade.

With merging of some ratings, the Navy will offer some Sailors with unique job specialties their own ratings in which to serve. For example, Navy divers and explosive ordnance disposal technicians soon will become their own specialized ratings. A machinist's mate

with the diver or explosive ordnance disposal specialty would compete with all other machinist's mates for advancement; a Sailor in the new rating will compete only against other divers or EOD technicians.

Rating mergers also have the potential to offer Sailors more career opportunities and a wider choice of job locations. Merging our ratings gives us an opportunity to take advantage of the desire of our hardest-charging Sailors to serve in challenging assignments.

The momentum for rating mergers is driven by a vision for the Navy to be more versatile, more lethal and more able to respond effectively to threats anywhere in the world on short notice. Sailors will be expected to develop a broader set of skills to be more effective and equally adept in different jobs on a variety of platforms, no longer able to specialize in just one rating.

To get this done, we need Sailors who are creative thinkers and lifelong learners to make the most of their knowledge for the Navy's changing missions.

Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Terry D. Scott

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photo by Spc. Benjamin Cossel

Army 1st Sgt. Joseph Vincent of the Ohio Army National Guard Medical Detachment speaks with David Guevara and Norma Castro after a counter-drug presentation March 29, at the Brassavola Bi-Lingual School in La Ceiba, Honduras.

Soldier teaches Honduran students dangers of drugs

By Spc. Benjamin Cossel

196th Mobile Public Affairs
Detachment

LA CEIBA, Honduras — In his 14 years working with the Franklin County (Ohio) Sheriff's Department as the Drug Abuse Resistance Education officer, Army 1st Sgt. Joseph Vince has visited plenty of schools — he just never expected to give his presentation in Central America.

Visiting the Brassavola Bi-Lingual School March 29, in La Ceiba, Honduras, Vince, a chief medical noncommissioned officer with the Ohio Army National

78%

The number of homes in which young Hondurans live where some drug is used — alcohol and tobacco being the most common, but also marijuana, cocaine and heroin

Guard Medical Detachment, taught children in grades 7-11th the dangers of drugs and gangs.

"In addition to being a D.A.R.E. officer, I've worked with the sheriff's department for a total of 20 years. I work as the school resource officer and the public relations for the department."

According to Vince, the idea generated during a meeting of local Honduran medical officials and members of the Ohio Army National Guard Medical Detachment recently as they prepared missions in support of Operation New Horizons 2006.

Operation New Horizons is a joint training exercise between members of the U.S. and Honduran militaries which will have built four schools, a maternity clinic and provided free medical care at 14 different locations in and around the coastal city of La Ceiba.

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Photo by Spc. Benjamin Cossel

Army 1st Sgt. Joseph Vince of the Ohio Army National Guard Medical Detachment, speaks to students March 29, at the Brassavola Bi-Lingual School in La Ceiba, Honduras.

Drugs

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"We've been working with Dr. Wilmer Almador, a local dentist, to determine what locations would benefit the most by our medical personnel setting up. Dr. Almador knew that I was a D.A.R.E. officer and asked me if I would make my presentation at a local school."

Students from the school worked with members of the U.S. Air Force as translators during operations. Dr. Almador thought it would be nice to give something back.

It took a few days to make all the preparations, but finally Vince was sitting in a car with school counselor David Guevara navigating the streets of La Ceiba on

their way to the school.

Arriving at the location, Vince was shown to an auditorium where more than 100 7th, 8th and 9th grade students awaited.

"This is a larger group of kids than I'm used to dealing with," said Vince. "Typically I make this presentation to about 30 or so children. But that's all right, just makes it more interesting."

Vince started the presentation by asking them where he was from in the United States. "Anyone know where Ohio is?"

Then he asked the kids why people use drugs. The group of timid school children eked out a response to which Vince slightly teased them.

"Come on, you're a

smart group of kids, I know you can do better than that!"

Eventually the kids became more excited in the presentation and answered Vince's questions with more vigor as he asked them about methamphetamines, cocaine and marijuana.

When asked about methamphetamines, most of the children responded that they didn't know what the drug was.

"I'm very glad to hear you don't know what meth is," said Vince. "Meth is a very, very addictive drug that we're having some very serious problems with back in the States."

"What about gangs?" asked Vince, "What do you know about gangs?"

The notorious Mara Salvatrucha 13 or MS-13 as its better known has a presence in the area.

"In the States, gangs are also a big problem. Especially the MS-13, and they are every bit as vicious in the States as they are here."

Vince then gave the students tips on how to stay away from drugs and reasons not to join gangs.

Ending his presentation, Vince read a poem entitled 'I am Meth' written by a meth addict serving prison time.

Soon after her release, the author of the poem was found dead of an overdose, the needle still hanging out of her arm.

"I think all and all the presentation was well received," said Vince. "It's like back in the States, the message probably got through to some and not to others. If just one child is helped by what I said, then it's all been worth it."

Later that afternoon, Vince gave the same presentation to 10th and 11th grade students.

Before leaving for the afternoon, Vince visited with school principal, Norma Castro.

"Our kids are exposed to those types of situations on a daily basis," said Castro. "I'm very glad that you (Vince) came in today and gave these kids the tools to make the right decisions."

Hoping the children took something away from his presentation, Vince noted that he definitely will incorporate this new experience to his schools back home.

"I'm definitely going to be telling my students about this experience and incorporating it into my presentation. This has been a really good experience."

Explore Honduras

Wildlife refuge host to exotic creatures, adventure

Cuero y Salado Wildlife Refuge is located 33 km from La Ceiba and was named after the two rivers, Cuero and Salado, that come together to form a large estuary on the Caribbean coast.

It was created to protect the endangered manatee population along with 35 other species of wildlife including jaguars, ocelots, boa constrictors, howler and white-faced monkeys, alligators and an abundance of fish life.

It is also home to 198 different species of birds.

To get to the refuge, travel to La Unión (it's approximately an hour and a half away from the base), and then hop onto the Salado Barra banana train for a 45-minute ride.

There is no fixed timetable for the railcar, and it runs depending on the number of visitors coming in.

Make sure to let the person in charge what time you want



Courtesy photo

Manatees, like this one, are frequent visitors to the Cuero y Salado Wildlife Refuge, as well as more than 225 other wildlife and bird species.

to return when purchasing the round-trip train tickets.

The train tickets are \$10 per person or \$5 per person in groups consisting of more than two people.

The Cuero y Salado Visitor Center staff will be at the in Salado Barra station to offer guidance and information about services and

activities of the area.

The visitor center is equipped with an interpretation room with information about the environment and a conference hall for educational and scientific events, with a sitting capacity for approximately 40 people.

In addition, there is a cafeteria, a souve-

nir shop, rest rooms and a large amount of printed materials with useful tourist information about the refuge.

The entrance into the refuge is \$10 per person.

Morale, Welfare and Recreation offers a tour of the refuge for \$65 which includes transportation to and from the base, a picnic lunch, an English-speaking guide and all the equipment and entrance fees.

The tour starts off with a ride in an open-air, 4-wheel-drive vehicle to historic Salado Barra's train

From there the tour continues by motorboat through the mangroves and estuaries of the reserve while a guide shows and teaches participants about the flora and fauna in the region.

Tour participants are encouraged to bring walking shoes or sport sandals, a bathing suit, a towel, insect repellent, sun-block and a camera.

Providing watch

Cabo Angel Cabrera, Honduras Army 4th Infantry Battalion, stands guard at the exit of a New Horizons 2006 - Honduras veterinarian training site March 31 in village of Diamante de Sion in the region of Atlantia. Cabrera is a part of a Honduran-American joint task force providing security, constructing a maternity clinic and four schools, and giving free medical care to the people of the La Ceiba area.

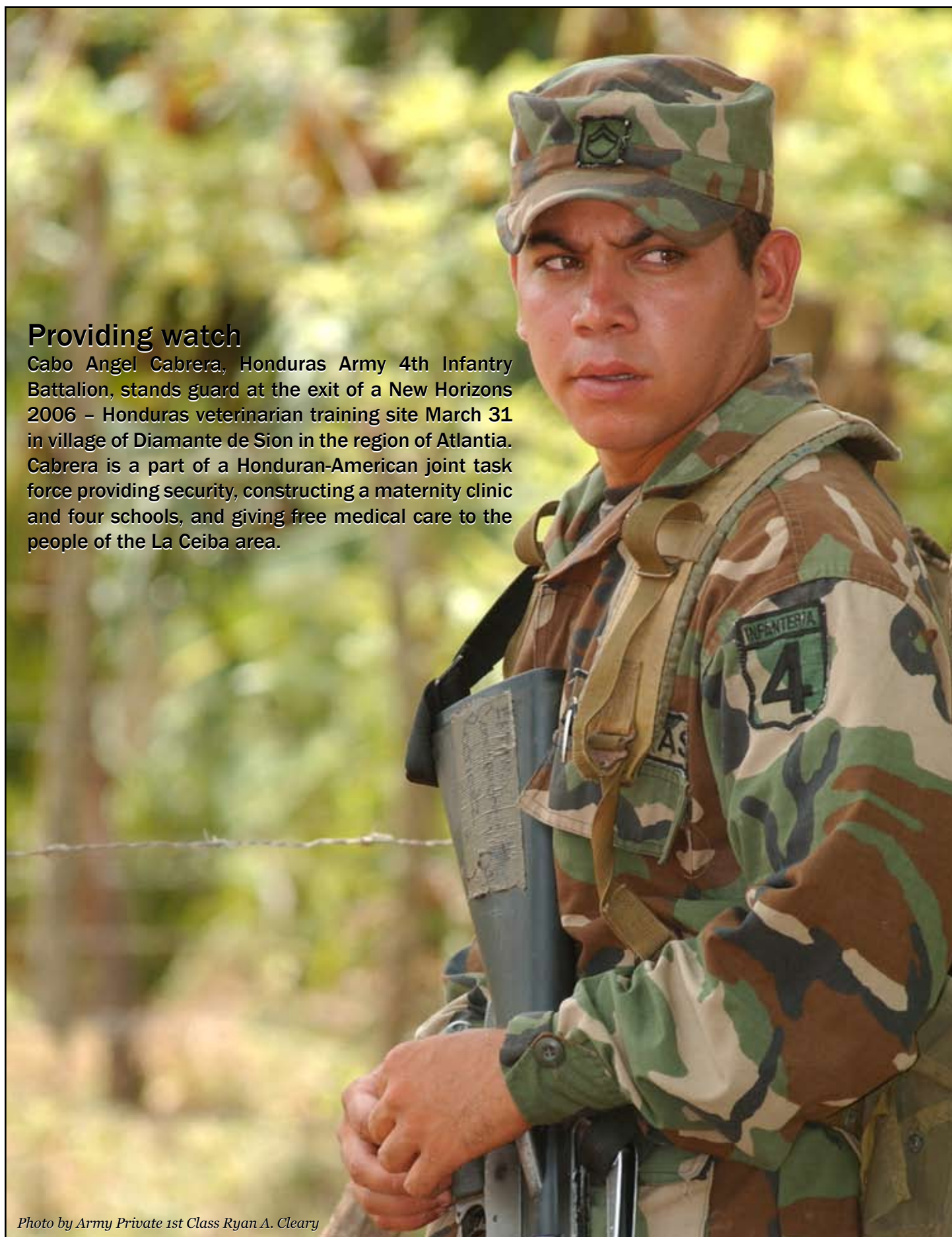


Photo by Army Private 1st Class Ryan A. Cleary